

COMMUNICATIONS

COLLEGIALITY AND INTERCHANGE IN ARMENIAN STUDIES*

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From the Bolshevik Revolution through the Cold War to the downfall of Communism, the ideological divide that scarred the political landscape of the 20th century produced regrettable consequences for scholarship in the social sciences and humanities. The physical barriers erected to deter contact facilitated the erection of others in the psychological sphere, giving rise to conceptions of alterity in theory and working method and perceptions of scholarly counterparts in terms of the Other. Lack of personal interchange and exchange of publications led to tensions, misunderstandings, and superficial generalizations resulting in a narrowing of scholarly horizons on both sides of this artificial boundary.

The presence of such perspectives two decades after the events of 1991 demonstrates the persistence of mental constructs with the difference on occasion that whereas previously partisanship in the West expressed itself through deeming scholars and their works unacceptable as Soviet, now there are tendencies to dismiss them as nationalist. Thus, the distinction remains while the categories change. Of course, the downfall of the Soviet Union and its ideology has led to the creation of a new set of nationalist discourses in the successor states—a quite natural, normal process. At the same time, I regret that this movement has resulted in a number of extreme manifestations of this ideology in certain countries, Armenia included, and condemn the support such views have received in some academic circles. Indeed, I organized a scholarly response to such pseudo-scientific approaches.

Unfortunately, some of the factors underlying this divide are still to be found, inhibiting communication and mutual understanding, lack of easy access to each other's publications and, in some cases, lack of knowledge of each other's languages, in which context I would like to highlight a widespread unfamiliarity with the important tradition of Russian-language scholarship in the West that leads to its marginalization or exclusion from the narrative. It is in hopes of encouraging more open dialogue and scholarly exchange that this piece is written to bring down the psychological barriers to communication and in a plea for the application of more uniform academic

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standards and expectations of scholarly writing across the board regardless of background and location.

The occasion for writing is a series of reviews and articles published in this journal and elsewhere reflecting views and positions expressed in my monograph on Indo-European and Near Eastern sources for the Armenian epic tradition that appeared in 2002.¹ John Colarusso and B. Sergent produced early reviews of my work,² while E. R. Anderson has contributed two articles on the Armenian epic that address my work directly or indirectly (the first co-authored with M. Host).³ Meanwhile, in reviewing a collection of essays on Armenian folklore and culture, J. R. Russell raised parallel issues on the origin of the Armenian people, which can conveniently be addressed together in this context.⁴ This will provide me an opportunity not only to respond to some of the specific questions they broach, but also to underscore certain general trends, which are worthy of more detailed consideration.

Nationalism

In the current post-Soviet political climate sketched above it is extremely important to distinguish serious scholarly work from popularizing theories lacking support in primary sources and cogent, comprehensive argumentation. For one's work to be judged as scholarly, it is obvious that it should remain free of extraneous ideological partiality or presuppositions. I believe that this axiom is one that should be shared by all and should apply to all those engaged in scholarship regardless of their institutional affiliation and geographical location. In view of this, I would argue that a serious case must be made to justify labeling a colleague's approach as "nationalist" or "tendentious." Let me illustrate the point with reference to some of my reviewers' comments.

Colarusso suggests that I betray a simplistic approach to the problem of Armenian ethnogenesis, that I am eager to date as early as possible the existence of the Armenian ethnic element in the Armenian Highland and reject Iranian influence on Armenian culture. According to him "at the time

¹ Armen Y. Petrosyan, *The Indo-European and Ancient Near Eastern Sources of the Armenian Epic*. Journal of Indo-European Studies Monograph No. 42 (Washington, D. C.: Institute for the Study of Man, 2002).

² John Colarusso, "A Fresh Look at Armenian Mythology," *JSAS* 14 (2005), pp. 167-174 and Bernard Sergent, *Revue de l'histoire des religions* (2005/3), pp. 361-365. For other reviews, see Sargis B. Harut'yunyan, *Journal of Indo-European Studies*, 30 (2002/3-4), pp. 484-489, and Gregory Y. Areshian, *Indo-European Studies Bulletin* 12 (2007/1).

³ Earl R. Anderson and Michel Host, "Genetic and Diffusional Themes in the Armenian Sasna Çrēr: The Sanasar Cycle," *JSAS* 14 (2005), pp. 5-53, and E. R. Anderson, "Traditional Epic Themes in the Armenian Sasna Çrēr: the Medz Mher Cycle," *JSAS* 16 (2007), pp. 113-152.

⁴ See James R. Russell, *Journal of Armenian Studies*, VII/1 (2002-2003), pp. 117-122, where he reviews Levon Abrahamian and Nancy Sweezy, eds., *Armenian Folk Arts, Culture and Identity* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2001).

depth with Akkadian the south-eastern highlands would more properly be called Anatolian than Armenian.”⁵ In response, let me state that my employment of the term “Armenian Highland” to denote the region is not motivated by contemporary nationalist tendencies but derives from Hermann Abich, who proposed it as a geographical term in the 19th century, since when it has gained wide acceptance worldwide. Its appropriateness is parallel, I think, to referring to the American continent as America for the period predating Amerigo Vespucci’s birth, even in the Mesozoic era.

I have also been criticised on similar grounds by Russell whose viewpoint on the formation of the Armenian people largely parallels that of I. M. Diakonoff. However, on certain issues Russell diverges from Diakonoff’s perspective. Thus, Diakonoff maintains the history of Armenia began from the times of Urartu and the pre-Urartian states, and not the fall of Urartu, as Russell and several Western scholars have argued. Similarly, Diakonoff accepted P. Jensen’s *Hatti > Hay* etymology of the Armenian ethnonym *Hay* from the late-Hittite land of Hate (the region of Malatia) and not from the Hittites, as presented by Russell. This latter derivation has often been criticized as improbable by certain leading scholars,⁶ and it is noteworthy that Diakonoff expressed his opinion on the matter with significant caution:

“Because of the linguistic uncertainty, the derivation of the term *Hayk*’ [Armenia – A.P.] from Hate, although most probable, cannot be considered to be conclusively proven [...] and therefore, other etymologies are also possible.”⁷

Remarkably, in one of his last works, Diakonoff actually confessed that the derivation of *Hay* from *Hayasa* “cannot be excluded.”⁸ Russell, however,

⁵ Colarusso, “Review,” p. 169.

⁶ See V. Bănăţeanu, “Nekotorye voprosy etnogeneza armjan” (Several Questions on the Armenians’ Ethnogenesis), *Patma-banasirakan handes* (1961/2), pp. 107-110; Gevorg B. Djahukian, “The Hayasa Language and its Relation to the Indo-European Languages,” *Archiv Orientalni* 29/3 (1961), pp. 387-388; Id., *Hayoc’ lezvi patmut’yun: naxagrayin žamanakašrjan* (History of Armenian language: the Pre-Literate Period), Erevan, 1987, pp. 281-283; Maurits N. van Loon, “Review of: I.M. Diakonoff. *The Prehistory of the Armenian People*, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* XLIV 3/4 (1987), p. 231; Vyacheslav V. Ivanov, “Vydelenie raznyx xronologicheskix sloev v drenearmjanskom i problema pervonachal’noj struktury teksta gimna Va(x)agnu” (Differentiation of Various Chronological Strata in Old Armenian and the Problem of the Original Structure of the Hymn to Vahagn) *Patma-banasirakan handes* 4 (1983), p. 30, n. 31; and Tamaz V. Gamkrelidze and Vyacheslav V. Ivanov, *Indoevropoeisij iazyk i indoevropejcy* (Indo-European Language and Indo-Europeans), Vol. 1, (Tbilisi, 1984), p. 913.

⁷ Igor M. Diakonoff, *The Pre-History of the Armenian People* (Delmar, New York: Caravan, 1984), p. 201, n.120.

⁸ Id., “K proistorii armjanskogo jazyka” (On the Prehistory of the Armenian Language) *Patma-banasirakan handes* (1983/4), p. 158.

is less open to consider alternative etymologies of the ethnonym *Hay*. Thus, he ascribes the Hayasian theory of the Armenian origins to some Armenian scholars, whose ideas are not accepted by others. Yet the Hayasian theory was not fabricated by Armenian nationalists or Stalinists, nor by Kapantsian, and evinces some versions based on the non-autochthonous character of the Armenian language on the Armenian Highland. Indeed, the Hayasa-Hay association was first observed by N. Martirosyan (1924), followed by K. Roth (1927), G. Kapantsyan (1931-33; 1948), P. Kretschmer (1932), A. Khach'atryan (1933), H. Dashian (1934), et al. Moreover, the importance of Hayasa in the formation of Armenia was stressed by Meillet and Adontz, *inter alios*. Among the supporters of this hypothesis, in its various formulations, one can mention such authorities as H. Manandyan, H. Achařyan, B. Piotrovsky, G. Melikishvili, S. Yeremyan, V. Georgiev, V. Bănăteanu, C. Toumanoff, G. Jahukyan, V. Ivanov, T. Gamkrelidze, G. Sargsyan, et al.⁹ Notably, Colarusso also proposes a new version of the Hayasian theory. Diakonoff was the only distinguished expert familiar with the problem who did not accept this viewpoint. For my part, I have proposed a new theory on the origin of Armenia since 1983.¹⁰ Obviously, none of the Germans Roth and Kretschmer, Russians Piotrovsky and Ivanov, Georgians Melikishvili and Gamkrelidze, Bulgarian Georgiev, Romanian Bănăteanu, nor any of the prominent Armenian scholars who touched upon the problem, were Armenian nationalists.

Continuing the charge of nationalism, Colarusso considers that I regard the Akkadian theonym *Ishtar* as borrowed from Armenian. In fact, far from suggesting it derives from Arm. *Astł*, I simply stated the opinion (citing Gamkrelidze and Ivanov) that it derives from **Haster-*, IE stem of Arm. *astł* 'star.' More significantly, the reviewer calls me to task over my exploration of the ethnic term *Aram*.

He [Petrosyan, AP] even finds the element *Ar(a)m-* in material as old as the third millennium BCE of northern Mesopotamia, and tries to link the Armenians with the Aramaeans (p. 163)! In mythic themes he would assign the originals of many elements common to Roman, Celtic, and Greek lore not to Indo-European, but to a source, in or near to Armenian territory if not in Armenia itself (pp. 152-158). This bias detracts from the excellent job he has done of compiling similarities between Greece and Anatolia that clearly suggest an old shared lore.¹¹

⁹ Armen Y. Petrosyan, "The Problem of Identification of the Proto-Armenians: A Critical Review," *JSAS* 16 (2007), pp. 36, 43-44, with bibliography.

¹⁰ Petrosyan, *Indo-European*, pp. 175ff.; Id., "The Problem of Identification," pp. 49ff.

¹¹ Colarusso, "Review," p. 171.

Since the onomastic element *Ar(a)m-* is known in Northern Mesopotamia from the third millennium BCE, I tried to link the ethnonyms of the Aramaeans and Armenians, not the actual Aramaean and Armenian peoples as such. What I actually wrote was: “it is hardly thinkable that two homonymous eponyms and almost comparable ethnonyms of neighboring ancient peoples etymologically may have been unrelated to each other.”

For the Armenian ethnonym *Armen*, Colarusso refers to Meillet’s view published in a work of 1936, that Greek *armenos* is borrowed from Old Pers. *Armina*. However, scholarship on the issue has not remained static. For example, Diakonoff, a scholar highly respected in the West, writes in a posthumous article that the Iranian *Armina* is borrowed from Gk. *armenos*.¹² Consequently, it would have been preferable if the reviewer had consulted the continuing discussion in more recent publications by Diakonoff and others on the Armenian ethnonym *Armen*¹³ before adding the exclamation mark. As for the possibility of Indo-European myths originating in the Armenian Highland or its environs, it is noteworthy that, according to several non-Armenian scholars, the Indo-European homeland itself was situated in the Armenian Highland or not far from it¹⁴ (as is also true for the Nostratic homeland).¹⁵

¹² Igor M. Diakonoff, “O samonazvanii armjanskogo naroda” (On the Autonym of the Armenian People), *Patma-banasirakan handes* 169 (2005/2), pp. 277-278.

¹³ See, for example, Boris B. Piotrovsky, *Vanskoe carstvo* (The Kingdom of Van), (Moscow, 1959), p. 124; Diakonoff, *Pre-History*, pp. 126, 199, n. 115, 204, n. 4. Diakonoff thinks that the toponym Arme, located between the Aramaeans and the mountainous tribes of Armenia, was the source of the ethno-toponym Armina/Armenia, which might have been formed with the help of the Aramaic ending of the presumable Urartian **Armini* ‘inhabitant of Arme,’ ‘Armean country.’ Note also the homophony of the eponyms of the Armenians and Aramaeans (Aram).

¹⁴ See, for example, Gamkrelidze and Ivanov, *Indoevropoeisij iazyk*; Colin Renfrew, *Archaeology and Language. The Puzzle of Indo-European Origins* (London, 1987), and Id., *Time Depth, Convergence Theory, and Innovation in Proto-Indo-European Languages in Prehistoric Europe* (Heidelberg, 2003); Aharon Dolgopolsky, “Cultural Contacts of Proto-Indo-European and Proto-Indo-Iranian with Neighbouring Languages,” *Folia Linguistica Historica. Acta Societatis Linguisticae Europaeae* VIII/1-2 (1987); Quentin D. Atkinson and Russell D. Gray, “How Old is the Indo-European Language Family? Progress or More Moths to the Flame?” *Phylogenetic Methods and the Prehistory of Languages*, ed. Peter Forster and Colin Renfrew (Cambridge: MacDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, 2006), pp. 91-92; James P. Mallory and Douglas Q. Adams, *The Oxford Introduction to Proto-Indo-European and the Proto-Indo-European World*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 460 ff.; Luigi L. Cavalli-Sforza and Alberto Piazza, “Diffusion of Genes and languages in Human Evolution,” in *The Evolution of Language. Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on the Evolution of Language*, ed. A. Cangelosi et al. (Hackensack, NJ: World Scientific 2006), pp. 255-266; Vyacheslav V. Ivanov, “The Indo-European Homeland in the Near East: New Evidence,” *Bulletin of the Georgian National Academy of Sciences*, 175/3(2007), pp. 127-137; Sergei A. Starostin, *Trudy po jazykoznaniju* (Works on Linguistics) (Moscow, 2007), pp. 825-826.

¹⁵ See, for example, *Semito-Hamitic Festschrift for A. B. Dolgopolsky and H. Jungrathmayr*, ed. Gabor Takacs (Berlin, 2008), p. 3.

In certain Abkhazian versions of the Nart epic, the mother of the Narts Sataney is depicted as descended from the *Hayxuz* tribe or clan, which, in accordance with the Abkhazian scholar G. Gunba's proposed etymology, I compared to the Armenian ethnonym *Hay*. Moreover, I compared the other name of Sataney's clan *Yermaj* with the Armenian ethnonym *Armen*. Colarusso, in contrast, interpreted *Yermaj* as "Armenian" in Abkhazian and, connecting it with the Adyghean *YermeL* "Armenian," interpreted them as "pace locative-not-omitted "not leaving anything out," as an allusion to the skill of Armenians at counting and keeping records." Here I present the opinion of the Abkhazian linguist V. Chirikba on this curious etymology (letters of 17 and 23 December, 2006). In Abkhazian, there is no[t] such a term for "Armenian." Abkhaz. *A-yermanə* and Adygh. *YermeLə* "Armenian" are borrowed from the Turkish term for the Armenians *Ermeni*, while Colarusso's idea is mere "folk etymology."¹⁶

Colarusso also imputes nationalistic motives to my interpretation of certain Hurro-Urartian toponyms as Armenian. He adduces one example: "Arm. Ardini, which continues Hur. ardi 'city'." At the same time, it has to be admitted that there is no basis for considering all the ancient onomastics of the Armenian Highland as Hurro-Urartian. Moreover, Armenian etymologies like the above have already been proposed by several scholars, including Diakonoff.¹⁷ (Colarusso himself tries to derive the toponym Hayasa of the Hittite sources from the Armenian transformation of Hattusa). Also, it is important to appreciate that in a book devoted to the origins of the epic tradition it was impossible to adduce exhaustive corroborations for all the etymologies presented there.

One should also note that the toponym Ardini is not Armenian. It was mentioned only in Urartian sources (the Assyrian name of the same city is Musasir) and was the main cultic center of the Urartian supreme god Haldi, on whose cult, as I tried to show, Indo-European influence was significant. The area of this city was the earliest home of the Urartians. Urartian reveals affinities with Hurrian, yet the Urartians and Hurrians were absolutely

¹⁶ Curiously enough, Colarusso etymologizes the family name of the Russian general Yermolov, the conqueror of the Caucasus, from the Adyghean *YermeL* 'Armenian,' see John Colarusso, *Nart Sagas from the Caucasus* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press), 2002, p. 47, n.12, and J. R. Russell in one of his works repeats this etymology. The surname in fact derives from the Russian personal name Yermolay, Yermola, Yermol, borrowed from the Greek form Hermolaos.

¹⁷ See, for example, Gevorg B. Djahukian, "Did Armenians Live in Asia Anterior Before the Twelfth Century BC?" in *When Worlds Collide. Indo-Europeans and Pre-Indo-Europeans*, ed. T. L. Markey and J. A. Greppin (Ann Arbor: Karoma, 1990), pp. 25-31; Id., "Armenian Words and Proper Names in Urartian Inscriptions," *Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on Armenian Linguistics*, ed. J. A. Greppin (Delmar, New York: Caravan, 1992), pp. 49-59; Igor M. Diakonoff, "First Evidence of the Proto-Armenian Language in Eastern Anatolia," *Annual of Armenian Linguistics*, 13 (1992), pp. 51-54; Petrosyan, "The Problem of Identification," pp. 33-34, with bibliography.

different culturally.¹⁸ The deity Haldi finds no parallel in the Hurrian pantheons. Many Hurrian cultural terms, too, lack parallels in Urartian. In this way, as the Urartian term for city is *patari*, Colarusso's preferred Hurrian etymology of Ardini, so beloved by the Hurritologists and Urartologists, lacks a serious foundation.

According to Sergent, my comparison of the name of the ancient land Išuwa, located to the north-east of the Hittites (actually: to the east) with the Armenian *ēš* 'donkey' < 'horse' is erroneous (a nationalistic idea): yet I have tried to reason my case (e.g., this land was the center of the horseman god Pirua), and have mentioned closely homophonic words for the term "horse" in the early languages of the region: Luw. *ašuwa*, Hurr. *ešši*, *iššiya*.¹⁹ Colarusso, in contrast, finds this etymology probable. Remarkably, this Armenian etymology of Išuwa, was proposed by two brilliant non-Armenian scholars in 1995 on completely different grounds.²⁰

Sergent applies the hybrid epithet "Armeno-Georgian," to the city of Ani to whose name, according to the critic, I groundlessly ascribe a Sumerian origin on the basis of nationalist motivation. Actually, the Ani Sergent is referring to was the capital of Armenia, which for a brief period fell under the rule of Georgian kings. On this analogy, one might argue that labeling Ani "Armeno-Georgian" is almost tantamount to calling Warsaw "Polish-Russian," Seoul "Korean-Japanese" or even Paris "Franco-German." More importantly, the Ani I was discussing in my book is a completely different city—Ani-Kamax, to the north-west of the Armenian Highland, which was never under Georgian rule. The distance between those cities "as the crow flies" is 400 km, an appreciable extent for the Armenian Highland. Sergent's error is therefore comparable to confusing the cities of Brest in Belarus and France. The second component in the toponym Ani-Kamax, as stated in my monograph, according to Acharyan derives from Akkad. *kima(h)hum* 'grave, sepulcher' (< Sumer. *ki-mah*). This is the ground for suggesting a Sumerian etymology for this toponym. A propos, the cult of the Sumero-Akkadian An(u) continued into Iranian times, which thus removes any basis for contending that I was attempting to predate the Armenian presence in the area. It should also be noted that this etymology was first proposed by the non-Armenian scholar N. Marr.²¹

¹⁸ Gernot Wilhelm, *Drevnij narod xurrity* (The Hurrians: an Ancient People) (Moscow, 1992), p. 76.

¹⁹ Petrosyan, *Indo-European*, pp. 23-24.

²⁰ Leonid A. Gindin and Vadim L. Tsymbursky, "Troja i 'pra-Ahhijawa'" (Troy and 'Proto-Ahhijawa'), *Vestnik drevnej istorii* 3 (1995), p. 31.

²¹ Nikolai Marr, *Ani: knižnaja istorija i raskopki na meste gorodišča* (Ani: Written History and Excavations at the Site of the City) (Moscow, Leningrad, 1934), p. 18. For the various etymologies of this toponym, see Armen Y. Petrosyan, *Aramazd: kerpar, paštamunk', naxatiper* (Aramazd: Character, Worship, Prototypes), (Erevan, 2006), pp. 69-73.

IE Basic Myth

Colarusso remarks that studies on mythology in the USSR and its successor states are characterized “by assertions about basic myths and themes that often seem bold by Western standards.” Nevertheless, there was only one reconstruction called the “basic myth” and the leading Soviet scholars never advanced such bold reconstructions as the Indo-European Creation myth conceived by B. Lincoln and J. Puhvel, or some of Colarusso's own reconstructions.²² Furthermore, though Dumézil's theory was subject to criticism in the West as well, I should mention its trenchant attack by Diakonoff.²³ In my own work I have utilized the ideas and reconstructions of both Western and Soviet scholars (e.g. Dumézil, Puhvel, Lincoln, Diakonoff, Ivanov, Toporov), following the normal scholarly approach of critical engagement with the ideas of leading specialists of the time.

Anderson finds impossible the etymology of the name of the mythic serpent from IE **wel-* (ascribed to V. N. Toporov) in the “basic myth” reconstructed by Ivanov and Toporov, resting on the etymology of the name of the Indic serpent *Vṛtra* from IE **wer-* (this is adduced probably from etymological dictionaries). For the “basic myth” he refers to only one of its authors' works, “cited from Petrosyan 2002.” Here one may query the probity of judging that reconstruction on the basis of information gleaned from my book and then, on discovering one “incorrect” etymology, rejecting the whole reconstruction. Surely Anderson does not think that the authors of that reconstruction were unfamiliar with the etymological dictionaries of Indic and other languages, bearing in mind their erudition and vast output on the Old Indic language. Quite apart from this, there are many other data (Baltic, Slavic, etc) that corroborate this reconstruction.²⁴

Sergent also criticizes the reconstruction of the “basic myth” by Ivanov and Toporov, on the basis of a work by Claude Sterckx. Unfortunately, I have not had the good fortune to read the latter, since, along with many other western publications, it is unavailable in Armenia. However, what Sergent writes betrays his imperfect grasp of this reconstruction. Perhaps I should repeat for my critic's benefit that the “basic myth” is not characteristic of Indo-European traditions alone; the Indo-European versions are distinguished

²² See the Indo-European etymologies of the Circassian material in Colarusso, *Nart Sagas from the Caucasus*; Idem, “The Hunters (Indo-European Proto-myths: The Storm God, The Good King, The Mighty Hunter),” *Journal of Indo-European Studies*, 3-4 (2008), 442-463.

²³ Igor M. Diakonoff, *Arxaicheskie mify Vostoka i Zapada* (Archaic Myths of East and West), (Moscow, 1990), pp. 111-113.

²⁴ As far as I am aware, there are two important articles in Western languages on this theme. See Vyacheslav V. Ivanov and Vladimir N. Toporov, “Le mythe indo-européen du dieu de l'orage poursuivant le serpent: reconstruction du schema,” *Échanges et communications. Mélanges offerts à C. Lévi-Strauss*, ed. P. Maranda and J. Pouillon (Paris-The Hague: Mouton, 1970), pp. 1180-1206; Id., “A comparative Study of the Group of Baltic Mythological Terms from the Root **wel-*,” *Baltistica* IX/1 (1973), pp. 15-28.

by the names of the figures and some peculiarities of plot. This is the context in which the Hurrian myth of Teššub was considered (see below), and the authors of the reconstruction are highly acquainted with the thunder god and serpent-slayer myths of various peoples. As already noted, many Indo-European mythological reconstructions are subjected to criticism, including those of Western scholars, yet this does not mean that they should be instantly discarded. It is significant that in reconstructing the “basic myth” the authors did not employ Armenian material. However, the heroes of “Sasna C’rer” correspond with the Indo-European scheme of the “basic myth” more than the epic figures of many other traditions through the attribute of the lightning sword and several other traits.²⁵

The name of the great Urartian god Šiwini, according to the most authoritative and widely accepted opinion, is of Indo-European (Hittite) origin.²⁶ This is disputed (I think ineffectively), but as far as I know, this has not provoked a special anti-Indo-Europeanist reaction. Indeed, many names of the Hurrian kings and a few names of the Hurrian gods are of Indo-European (Mesopotamian Aryan) origin. Nevertheless, Anderson finds that my conclusion that the myths of Teššub and Ullikummi in Hurrian mythology are Indo-European rests on two implausible etymologies: 1) the comparison of Ullikummi with **wel-* (this is a misrepresentation, as the whole reconstruction of the mythologem of IE **wel-* is wrong); 2) the association of the name Teššub with the Greek Theseus (regarding it as merely a remote sound-similarity). Sergent similarly qualifies the latter as “linguistique sauvage.”

In reality, I tried to demonstrate that the Hurrian myth exhibits Indo-European influence.²⁷ In this connection, the rejection of the mythologem of **wel-* is surprising. I compared it with the name of the land Ueliku-ni/hi of the Urartian sources (= Arm. Gelak‘uni) where, by the way, the *višaps* or dragon-stones are concentrated (the *višap* ‘dragon’ being the adversary of thunder deities in Armenian mythology). The name of the Hurro-Urartian thunder god Teššub/Teišeba who is depicted with an axe could be associated with IE **tek’s-* ‘axe.’

The relation of Teššub/Teišeba with Theseus is another matter. The Urartian Teišeba (to be read: / T^heis/šeba, T^heis/šewa/) can be the source of

²⁵ Sargis B. Harut‘yunyan, “Višapamartə “Sasna C’rerum” (The Dragon-Fighting Myth in “Daredevils of Sasun,” *Lraber hasarakakan gitut’yunneri* (1981/11), pp. 65-85; Id., *Hay araspelabanut‘yun* (Beirut: Hamazgayin, 2000) 167 ff.

²⁶ See, for example, Igor M. Diakonoff, *Hurrisch und urartäisch*, (Munich, 1971), p. 81; Id., “O nekotoryx napravleniiax v urartskom jazykoznanii i novyx urartskix tekstax,” (On Some Trends in Urartian Linguistics and New Urartian Texts), *Drevnij vostok* 5 (1988), pp. 172, 240; Gamkrelidze and Ivanov, *Indoevropoeisij iazyk*, p. 897.

²⁷ For the consideration of this myth in the context of the “basic myth,” see Vladimir N. Toporov, *Russkie Sviatogor: svoe i čužoe* (The Russian Sviatogor: Familiar and Foreign). *Slavjanskoe i balkanskoe jazykoznanie: Problemy jazykovux kontaktov* (Moscow: Nauka, 1983), p. 123.

Gk. Theseus but not vice versa. Theseus is associated with the axe and his main exploit occurs in the labyrinth, which is derived from *labrys* “double axe.” In contrast, the existing Hurro-Urartian etymologies of Teššub are very speculative and highly hypothetical. They do not explain the termination of the name and lack a sound grounding in the Hurro-Urartian languages and the characteristics of the god.²⁸ By the way, this and some of my other interpretations were sympathetically received by Diakonoff, a respected expert of Hurro-Urartian culture and language.²⁹ Even Colarusso, whom Sergent hardly would call a “linguist sauvage,” considers my etymology of Teššub/Teišeba admissible.

Commenting on my treatment of the myth of the three brothers, Sergent expects that in writing about Armenian reflexes of the myth I should also refer not only to Indian, but also Germanic and Greek parallels. Nevertheless, on the page of my study he cites³⁰ the possible ancient Near Eastern counterparts of the Armenian triplets are detailed. The myth of the three brothers who are forefathers of the Armenians is considered in another chapter, where I indicate that many Indo-European and non-Indo-European peoples possess such myths (cf., for example, the story of Noah and his three sons), but the Armenian material is most comparable with the Germanic and Iranian data, along with a possible Slavic parallel (which are all presented).³¹

Sergent does not consider as serious my reconstruction of the Indo-European myth of the contrast between black and white, arguing that such myths could be recreated time and time again in later epochs. Nevertheless, in my reconstruction the names of the opposing figures are derived from IE **rēmo-* and **(H)arg'-*. Apart from Indic, one or both of those roots are lost in the languages where the traces of this myth are found. For those more or less acquainted with Indo-European issues it should be clear that a myth reconstructed with such names would necessarily derive from earliest times before the process of linguistic diversification. Sergent states that the whole world thought that the name Rōmulus is derived from the city of Rome, while I derive it from IE **rēmo-/*rōmo-* ‘black.’ It is necessary to view the problem within its original context. I consider the question in a chapter devoted to black and white cities: Rōmulus comes from the city of Alba ‘White’ and founds Rome (Rōma), which is comparable to **rōmo-* ‘black.’ Thus, Rōmulus, as a derivative of Rōma, may ultimately be derived from **rōmo-*.³²

²⁸ Daniel Schwemer, *Die Wettergottgestalten Mesopotamiens und Nordsyriens im Zeitalter der Keilschriftkulturen*, (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2001), pp. 444-445, n. 3698.

²⁹ See, for example, Levon H. Abrahamian, “Hero Chained in a Mountain: On the Semantic and Landscape Transformations of a Proto-Caucasian Myth,” *Aramazd: Armenian Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 1 (2006), pp. 208-221.

³⁰ Petrosyan, *Indo-European*, p. 19.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 86, 120, 179.

³² Ibid., p. 75.

Sergent presents my etymological reconstruction as if I were comparing several unrelated names containing of the elements *arm-*, *arma-*, *arim-*, and then associating them with Hermes. Of course, this is not the case. I always list the existing etymologies of the names I adduce. As for Hermes, I compared the myth of his killing Argos with the Indian myth where Rāma kills Arjuna. In both cases the name of the hero's adversary is derived from IE **arg-* 'white,' and the reason for their conflict is the ravished calf of the hero's father. Moreover, Hermes, who is called a "friend of dark night," entirely corresponds to the 'black' Rāma (I mean the character, not the name). What I actually wrote was: "the cult of Hermes probably absorbed certain traits of an early deity (or deities), a local version of the Indo-European **rēmo-*, slayer of **arg-*."³³ In view of this, Sergent's criticism appears unfocused and inept.

IE Etymology

Colarusso takes issue with a number of the etymologies I proposed or cited from other scholars. One of these is the etymology of the name of Hayk, eponymous ancestor of the Armenians, from the Indo-European root **poti-* on the basis of Meillet's view that the latter would be expected to result in the Armenian reflex *oy*. While I am naturally familiar with Meillet's work (which, by the way, was translated into Armenian in 1988), it is important to note that in this matter also scholarship has continued to advance since 1936 when Meillet's work appeared. A contemporary discussion of the problem requires us to take into consideration the monographs of Acharyan, Jahukyan, and others on the history and comparative linguistics of Armenian and their investigation of the phonological developments Colarusso rejects. Granted my book's focus on mythology, I did not provide exhaustive citations from those works, except for Acharyan's etymological dictionary and Jahukyan's excellent volume on the history of Armenian (1987). Briefly let me outline the steps behind the reconstruction. First, the **o > a* development is characteristic of Armenian in certain positions.³⁴ Second, although IE **p-* before *o* can disappear, this does not occur in all cases. After offering several examples on the reflections of IE **p-* in Armenian, Acharyan concludes, "it cannot be said that *p* becomes *h* before *e* and disappears before *o*." Suffice it to list a few out of the many examples of this feature: *het*, *yet*, *et* (**ped-*); *hol*, *holani* (**pol-*); *hov*, *hog*, *hogi* (< **pow-*).³⁵ The etymology *hay* < **poti-* may be reasoned in detail, and was accepted by Jahukyan, one of the greatest 20th century

³³ Ibid., p. 46.

³⁴ See, for example, Frederik Kortlandt and Robert Beekes, *Armeniaca. Comparative Notes by Frederik Kortlandt with an Appendix on the Historical Phonology of Classical Armenian by R. Beekes*, (Ann Arbor: Caravan, 2003), pp. 40, 156.

³⁵ Hrach'ya Acharyan, *Liakatar k'erakanut'yun hayoc' lezvi* (Comprehensive Grammar of Armenian), vol. 6, (Erevan, 1971), pp. 519-520.

authorities in the field of Armenian linguistics.³⁶ I have addressed the semantic aspect of the problem in several of my works.³⁷

Colarusso presents the form *ardzmn* as the regular Armenian reflex of Indo-European **aryomen-*, but this form is impossible in Armenian. Perhaps he was trying to represent *arjmn*, but that too would be incorrect; the **y > j* change occurs only if the previous vowel is not *a*. As I proposed, **aryo-* would yield *ayr*,³⁸ *o*, as in some other cases, would yield *a* to obtain **ayraman*, which, conflated with the name Aram, could form a basis for the name Aramaneak. Similarly, the name Eruand could be etymologized as a derivative of **peru-* (**perwnt-*). This etymology, as I have stated in my book, is not mine. My contribution was merely to mention that this name would have been conflated with the Iranian Aruand (which is frequently considered as the source of the Armenian Eruand).

Colarusso's review also queries several views I allude to, which he regards as poorly grounded. He also ascribes them to me, though they have been advanced by others, often prominent Armenologists, as is clearly indicated in my bibliography. In one case he argues I etymologize the name of the Armenian epic hero Bałdasar from IE **bel* 'white, shining' and then derive the toponym Baghdad from Bałdasar. In contrast, what I actually did was to state a very well known fact: Bałdasar is the Armenian form of the Biblical Balthazar.³⁹ Then: "Bałdasar figures as the eponym of Baghdad... (the phonetic value of New Arm. *ł* approximates to New Gk. *γ* [= *gh*])."⁴⁰ Colarusso's statement seems to suggest he reads me as arguing bluntly that the term Baghdad emerges from the Armenian personal name Bałdasar. The result is that this "folk etymology" is attributed to me while even the illiterate tradents of the oral epic do not directly remark that Bałdasar named Baghdad after himself. Moreover, it should be noted that there is no IE root **bel-* (there is **bhel-* 'bright, white'). As for the issue of the phonetic evolution of the character *ł*, not only am I well aware of it, but in fact remarked on it on the page in question.

³⁶ Gevorg B. Djahukian, "O sootnošenii xajasskogo i armjanskogo jazykov (On the Relation of the Armenian and Hayasan Languages), *Patma-banasirakan handes* (1988/1), p. 68; Id., "Did Armenians Live in Asia Anterior Before the Twelfth Century BC?," p. 26; Id., *Zriyc'ner hayoc lezvi masin* (Discussions on the Armenian language), (Erevan, 1992), p. 50; Id., "Nor tvyalner hayoc' naxak'ristoneakan kroni masin" (New Data on the Pre-Christian Religion in Armenia), *Patma-banasirakan handes* (1992/1), p. 18.

³⁷ See, for example, A. Y. Petrosyan, "The Problem of Identification," pp. 30-31; Id., "Forefather Hayk in the Light of Comparative Mythology," *Journal of Indo-European Studies*, 37/1-2 (2009), pp. 155-163, with bibliography.

³⁸ Petrosyan, *Indo-European*, p. 85. See also Gevorg B. Djahukian *Hayoc lezvi patmut'yun: naxagrayin žamanakašrjan* (Erevan, 1987), p. 182; Kortlandt and Beekes, *Armeniaca*, pp. 161-162.

³⁹ Petrosyan, *Indo-European*, p. 137.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 68.

In his review, Colarusso lists the conflation of homonymic stems as my most egregious error. In his opinion, I do not distinguish the various semantic levels of the homophonic stems **ner-* and **wel-*. Nevertheless, in my book I continually cite Toporov on the reflections of those stems in mythology.⁴¹ If the root of a mythological name has homophones, not only one, but several meanings would be associated with this figure and mythologem of necessity. For instance, for the mythologem of IE **wel-* Toporov refers to several homophonic roots: ‘death and the dead,’ ‘Kingdom of Death,’ ‘riches and power,’ ‘will, wish,’ ‘speech and poetic art,’ etc, to which I have added the stem **wel-* ‘to see.’ By the way, this is consonant with R. Jakobson’s analysis, which I also cite in my study.⁴²

Similarly, the Indo-European ethnonyms *Volcae*, *Velsounas*, *Volski*, etc. are compared with the name of the mythic serpent **wel-* by Ivanov and Toporov, the authors of this reconstruction, not by me⁴³ (I only adduced the Arm. *Gelni* ‘Armenian’). It is noteworthy that Toporov was a great linguist who distinguished five periods of etymological approaches.⁴⁴ He worked on the fifth and highest level,⁴⁵ whose particularities and characteristics could not be discussed in detail in a monograph on the Armenian epic tradition.

Finally, Colarusso mentions some “minor errors, as with the Indic tradition, the eagle brings mead to Indra, not soma (p. 60), or with the etymology of “Ireland.” Nevertheless, in the text I cited (Rigveda IV.26), it is stated several times that the bird brings soma (e.g. “the Falcon took and brought the Soma”).⁴⁶ As for the etymology of Ireland, which is, of course, disputable to some extent, I presented it as is normally done in works on IE **aryo-* and etymological dictionaries.

Armenian Epic Issues

My ideas on the formation of Armenian epic are not well presented in Anderson’s treatment. The author also labors under other difficulties due to his inability to command the original Armenian material and his resulting dependence on secondary sources, not all of which are equally reliable. Thus, his overview of the history of the publication of “*Sasna Çrér*,” details of its oral performance, etc, includes a number of surprising errors, some of them

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 8-9, 80.

⁴² Ibid., p. 80.

⁴³ Vyacheslav V. Ivanov and Vladimir N. Toporov V.N., “K voprosu o proisxoždenii etnonima “valaxi” (The Ethnonym “Valax” Revisited) in *Etničeskaia istoria vostočnyx romancev* (The Ethnic History of Eastern Romances) (Moscow, 1979).

⁴⁴ Vladimir N. Toporov, “Iz indoevropskoj etimologii. V (1),” *Etimologija* 1991-1993, (1994), pp. 126 ff.

⁴⁵ See, for example, Levon H. Abrahamian, “Vladimir Nikolaevich Toporov,” *Aramazd: Armenian Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 3/1 (2008).

⁴⁶ See, for example, Ralph T. H. Griffith, *Sacred Writings. Hinduism: The Rig Veda*, R. Griffith, trans., (New York: Book-of-the-Month, 1992), pp. 218-219.

paralleled by Sergent. According to both, the Sasun epic, most likely, was never performed in its entirety. However, three volumes of the epic's original oral versions appeared around World War II, several of which contain all four cycles. These editions were then followed by further publications of the epic, including four volumes issued by the Armenian Academy, as well as editions of other versions collected by the individual folklorists (e.g. G. Grigoryan, R. Hambarts'umyan). The first publications of the epic formed the matrix for later literary creations from the beginning of the 20th century such as those of H. T'umanyan, A. Isahakyan, N. Zaryan, etc.

Similarly, Sergent's presentation of the Armenian epic tradition at the beginning of his review misrepresents many of its features. According to him, the sources of that tradition are Khorenats'i and "Sasna Çrêr." The latter, he avers, was unified as one epic by Armenian scholars in the 1930s, but the stories and characters contained in those two sources are very different from one other. Nevertheless, in reality, the Armenian epic tradition is known from many other early Armenian authors (P'awstos Buzand, Hovhan Mamikonian, T'ovma Artsruni, etc.), as I will elaborate on below. As noted above, I reiterate that "Sasna Çrêr" is not an artificial epic pieced together by scholars from disparate sources. On the contrary, it is an integral epic that was frequently performed in its entirety. Scholars only edited it and created a composite text known as "David of Sasun."

It should also be said that different kinds of affinities can be detected between "Sasna Çrêr" and various early Armenian authors. This applies particularly to some of the epic characters and their names. Thus, Sanasar figures in Khorenats'i and Artsruni as the founder of the Artsruni house in the dynastic saga. Moreover, some of the characters in "Sasna Çrêr" are almost identical in various respects with figures in other ancient epics (e.g., heroes imprisoned in mountain caves, Artawazd in Khorenats'i and Little Mher in "Sasna Çrêr"), as has been noted by Armenian and non-Armenian scholars, including F. Feydit, translator and author of the preface of the French translation of "David of Sasun."⁴⁷ In this light Sergent's "functional" criticism of my comparison of the twins Sanasar and Baldasar of "Sasna Çrêr" with Khorenats'i's Eruaz and Eruand to the effect that the former are pure warriors (purs guerriers), while Eruaz is a priest and Eruand a king, is astonishing. It is only Sergent's idea that Sanasar and Baldasar are "pure warriors." In contrast, those figures are manifestly comparable: e.g., Eruand and Sanasar are twins, epicized versions of the thunder god, rulers, and founders of new cities. In Armenology those figures are considered as deriving from the archaic divine twin founders, and their myths coincide in many other details.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Frédéric Feydit, *David de Sassoun: épopée en vers* (Paris: Gallimard/Unesco, 1964), pp. 40-41, 46.

⁴⁸ See especially Sargis B. Harutyunyan, *Hay araspelabanut'yun* (Armenian Mythology) (Beirut: Hamazgayin, 2000), pp. 341-349.

On the etymology of Convinar, a heroine of “Sasna Çrêr,” Colarusso quotes me as stating “The names Tsovinar (tsov ‘purple’ + nar ‘lake,’ cf. Akkadian naru ‘river’ (p. 10) and Inara are comparable,” adding by way of comment “I presume that he means the figures, not names.” Significantly, what I actually wrote was: “the characters and names of Covinar and Inara are comparable,” adducing texts to demonstrate that Covinar, both in her name and character, is parallel to the Hittite Inara.⁴⁹ However, I totally discount Colarusso’s etymology. How could anybody acquainted with the Armenian term *cov* ‘sea’ present it as ‘purple’ and cite the non-existent *nar* as ‘lake’? In contrast, the association of Covinar with *cov* ‘sea’ is obvious (she is also called by the derivatives of *cov*: Covean, Coveal). Hence, I suggest we may interpret her name as ‘Nar of the sea’ or ‘Inar of the sea’ where Nar is a reconstructed theonym (Kapantsyan) comparable to the Greek Nereids. Though, unlike Colarusso, Sergent is not a linguist, he nevertheless considers erroneous the above comparison of Convinar to the goddesses Nereis, Nerthus, and Inara. I can only state once more that I cited Toporov’s work where the etymological connection between those names is presented.⁵⁰

In the context of names of characters in other Armenian epics, although I presented the existing etymologies of the name of Payapis, the adversary of the Armenian patriarch Aram, citing various authors who compared it with Egyptian, Phrygian, and Hurrian names,⁵¹ Sergent misstates the case, presenting the matter as if I, ignorantly, compare the Egyptian name Apis with the Hurrian stem *api*.

Caucasian Epic Issues

I have great respect and admiration for Colarusso’s research and translation in the sphere of West Caucasian epic.⁵² As an expert not only of Caucasian languages, linguistics, and epic traditions but also of Indo-European linguistics and mythology, I doubly appreciate his evaluation of my work. In view of this and by way of furthering scholarly dialogue, it may not be inappropriate to draw the reader’s attention to certain inconsistencies with regard to a few specific issues broached in his review. One of these concerns the identity of the father of the great hero of these epics. In his review, Colarusso argues I am incorrect in stating that in the Abkhazian epic Narjxow generally appears as the hero’s father, referring rather to Sos or Zart in that capacity. However, after reading many variants of the epics of Caucasian peoples and works dedicated to them, I still find that in the vast majority of

⁴⁹ Petrosyan, *Indo-European*, p. 8.

⁵⁰ Sergent reserves positive mention only for the juxtaposition of two ethnonyms: Arm. Gašk‘ and Hittite Kaška referred to in my book. I would like to set him at ease: this comparison was made long ago, not by me, in works I duly referenced. See Petrosyan, *Indo-European*, p. 168.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 98, n.353.

⁵² Colarusso, *Nart Sagas*.

the Abkhazian and Abazian versions the hero's father appears as Yerjxow/Narjxow, though in the composite text he is referred to as Zartizav⁵³ (not Zart). Moreover, in this sphere I referred to the best native Caucasian specialists of the Caucasian epics. Thus, in Inala-Ipa's study cited in my work, it is stated that Narjxow "most frequently figures"⁵⁴ in the role of the hero's father.

Turning to the Ossetian epic, Colarusso states that "the incest is between Satana and her son Batradz, rather than her husband Uryzmag." It appears that in this he is basing himself on the Circassian data, where, indeed, there is no allusion to any incest between Uryzmag and Satana.⁵⁵ However, the situation is completely the reverse with regard to the Ossetian evidence, all of which indicates that the incest takes place between Satana and her brother Uryzmag.⁵⁶ The issue has been analyzed by several scholars, two of whom I cite in my book.⁵⁷

In discussing the fundamental opposition between black and white heroes, Sosruqo the great hero of the West Caucasian epic features prominently. In Colarusso's review it is argued that, as his blackness derives from being tempered in the forge, he cannot be regarded as a "black hero" 'in Petrosyan's sense.' At the same time, granted that he is persistently referred to as a "black man"⁵⁸ and pitted against a "white" hero, I would argue he emerges as an

⁵³ Georgij D. Gulia, Shalva D. Inal-Ipa, et al., *Priključenija narta Sasrykvy i ego devjanostadevjati brat'ev* (The Adventures of the Nart Sasrykwa and His Ninty-Nine Brothers) (Sukhumi, 1988), p. 27; see also Shalva D. Inal-Ipa, *Pamjatniki abxazskogo fol'klora* (Monuments of Abkhazian Folklore) (Sukhumi, 1977), p. 66.

⁵⁴ Inal-Ipa, *Pamjatniki*, pp. 14, 66-67; see also Shota Kh. Salakaya, *Abxazskij narodnyj geroičeskij epos* [Abkhazian Folk Heroic Epic], (Tbilisi, 1966), pp. 171-172, 179; Zurab D. Dzhapua, *Abxazskie arxaicheskie skazaniya o Sasryua i Abryskile* (Archaic Abkhazian Sagas on Sasrykua and Abryskil) (Sukhumi, 2003), pp. 174, 250, 357.

⁵⁵ For this difference between the Circassian and Ossetian epics, see especially Askerbi T. Shortanov, "Geroičeskij epos adygov 'Narty'" (The Heroic Epic of the Adyghe 'Narts'), in *Skazaniya o nartax – epos narodov Kavkaza*, ed. A. A. Petrosyan (Moscow, 1969), p. 222.

⁵⁶ See, for example, Vsevolod Miller, *Osetinskie etjudy* (Ossetian Studies), Part 1, (Moscow, 1881), pp. 48-49; Vasilij Abaev, *Nartovskij epos* (The Nart Epic), *Izvestija Severo-Osetinskogo naučno-issledovatel'skogo institut*, vol. X, 1 (Dzauzhikau, 1945), p. 37; Id., *Narty: epos osetinskogo naroda* (The Narts: Epic of the Ossetian People), (Moscow, 1957), pp. 125-131; Id., *Skazaniya o nartax. Osetinskij epos* (The Nart Sagas: the Ossetian Epic) (Moscow, 1981), pp. 43-45.

⁵⁷ See, for example, Georges Dumézil, *Mythe et épopée I* (Paris: Gallimard, 1968), pp. 550ff.; Vyacheslav V. Ivanov, "O mifopoetičeskix osnovax latyšskix dain," (On the Mythopoeic Bases of Latvian Dains), *Balto-slavianskie issledovaniia* 1984, pp. 1986-87.

⁵⁸ See, for example, Grigorij I. Broido, (ed.), *Kabardinskij folklor* (Kabardinian Folklore) (Moscow, Leningrad, 1936), pp. 15, 23, 24, 29; A. I. Alieva, Asker M. Gadagatl, Zyramyku P. Kardangushev, eds., *Narty. Adygskij geroičeskij epos* (Narts. The Adyghean Heroic Epic) (Moscow, 1974), pp. 199, 200, 215; Vladislav G. Ardzinba, "Nartskij sjužet o roždenii geroja iz kamnia" (The Nart Motif of the Hero's Birth From a Stone), in *Drevnjaja Anatolija*, ed. B. Piotrovskij et al. (Moscow: Nauka, 1985), pp. 158-159; Id., "K istorii kul'ta železa i kuznečnogo remesla (počitanie kuznicy u abxazov)" (On the History of the Cult of Iron and

excellent embodiment of the black hero “in Petrosyan’s sense,” for which the circumstances of his nigrity (his body being fashioned from black iron) are secondary. Here, too, Colarusso calls into question the whiteness of Sosruqo’s adversary Tetraš/Totraš/Totradz as being “black and obscuring, not white.” Nevertheless, the hero, is commonly referred to as a “white hero with a yellow arm.”⁵⁹ Moreover, it would be strange not to compare the name of a “white hero” with the homophonic stem *tetr-* ‘white’ of the neighboring Georgian language. In view of this, the Indo-European etymology of the name Colarusso advances appears somewhat speculative and unconvincing.⁶⁰

Indo-European and non-IE Issues

According to Anderson, “Petrosyan presupposes that *all* details in the “Illuyanka myth” are PIE [Proto-Indo-European] in origin, that he bases on four tenuous etymologies.” He claims that I etymologize the name of the Hittite serpent Illuyanka from IE **wel-* ‘white, bright’ + **ang^wh-i-* ‘serpent.’ First, I have never written that *all* the details of the myth in question are Indo-European. Secondly, in the first part of this etymology from **wel-* Anderson misrepresents my view: I would not present such a preposterous etymology since there is no IE **wel-* ‘white, bright.’ With regard to the other points, I mentioned that Ivanov, Toporov, Lincoln, and Watkins consider this myth as Indo-European, and that the second component of the name Illuyanka “somewhat recalls IE **ang^wh-i-* ‘snake, serpent.’” This latter etymology is in fact most tenable and is widely accepted.⁶¹ The Indo-European interpretation of the name of the Purulli festival derives from Toporov (Anderson may have learned about this etymology from my work, but he rejects it without studying Toporov’s arguments). Obviously, here is not the place to reprise all my argument. Furthermore, the etymologies in my book are presented in hypothetical form (in general, etymologies, as well as mythological reconstructions, are, to a certain degree, hypothetical). Thus, I wrote: “the myth and names of the considered text seem to be of Indo-European origins.” It is clear that “Indo-European myth” everywhere is a mixture of Indo-European and local non-Indo-European elements. Hence the rejection of ideas on the basis of indirect information is not good scholarly practice.

Smithcraft (the Worship of Smithery) by the Abkhazians), *Drevnij Vostok: etnokul’turnye svyazi*, [The Ancient East: Ethnocultural Contacts] (Moscow, 1988), p. 271.

⁵⁹ See, for example, Alieva et al, *Narty. Adygskij geroičeskij epos*, pp. 248, 384, n.6; Ardzinba, “Nartskij sjužet,” pp. 146-147.

⁶⁰ See Colarusso, *Nart Sagas*, pp. 240-242.

⁶¹ Joshua Katz, “How to be a Dragon in Indo-European: Hittite Illuyankas and its Linguistic and Cultural Congeners in Latin, Greek, and Germanic,” *Mir Curad. Studies in Honor of Calvert Watkins*, ed. J. Jasanoff, H. Malchert, and L. Oliver (Innsbruck: Institut für Sprachwissenschaft der Universität Innsbruck, 1998), pp. 320ff. Illuyanka is regarded as the same compound as Lat. *Anguilla* and Gk. ἄγγελος ‘eel,’ with the elements reversed.

While impugning reconstructions proposed by me and various Soviet scholars, Anderson appears surprisingly unfamiliar with the work of Dumézil, founder of the modern comparative method in mythology, regarding the first part of “Sasna Çrēr” (circumstantially presented in my book). In his analysis of the Armenian material, Dumézil underscores three Indo-European themes: the congenital inequality of the twins, the theme of the “tricked” *svayamvara* marriage, and the rejuvenation of the old men who had wooed Deljun-Cam,⁶² and shows that the best parallel to the Armenian twins is found in the Roman tradition.⁶³ There he also pinpoints the best parallel for Sanasar's entrance into the lake in the Ossetian epic.⁶⁴ Anderson, in contrast, mentions only the inequality of the twins and presents the non-Indo-European Circassian parallel to Sanasar's entrance into the lake (obviously borrowed from the Indo-European Ossetian). Furthermore, Anderson appears not to accept my analysis of the character of Mher/Mithra. Citing my comparison of Mher's slaying a bull with a similar episode in the life of the Western Mithra, he adds a “but,” adding that there the semiotic focus is different. Unfortunately, the general nature of Anderson's comment does not afford the reader any clarification as to how precisely his statement relates to my proposal of affinities between Mithra and Mher. In this connection, I should underline that my proposal is based upon Diakonoff's insight on the derivation of the Western Mithra and the character Mher of the Armenian epic from the Urartian god Haldi.⁶⁵

Meanwhile, Sergent harshly criticizes my Indo-European etymologies of the names of the Urartian kings (absence of method, nationalist motivation, and ignorance). At the same time, it is actually a widespread phenomenon that the royal dynasties in many states were of foreign origin, and hence the names of their kings were not derived from the local languages. In this way, M. van Loon and M. Salvini ascribe Aramaean origin to the first dynasty of Urartu.⁶⁶ In general, the names of the Urartian kings are inexplicable in Urartian; this applies particularly to of the name Rusa, borne by four kings, for which Urartian origin can automatically be excluded in view of the fact that in Urartian a word cannot begin with initial *r*-. As I noted in my book, various European scholars have been comparing those names with Balkan names

⁶² Georges Dumézil, *Le roman des jumeaux* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), pp. 119-129.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 120-121; Petrosyan, *Indo-European*, p. 74, n. 268.

⁶⁵ See Igor M. Diakonoff, “K voprosu o simvole Xaldi” (The Symbol of Haldi Revisited), *Drevnij Vostok* (1983)/4 and the extensive English summary appended; Armen Y. Petrosyan, “Haldi and Mithra/Mher,” *Aramazd: Armenian Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 1 (2006), 222-238.

⁶⁶ Maurits N. van Loon, *Urartian Art* (Istanbul, 1966), p. 7, n.24; Mirjo Salvini, “La formation de l'état urartéen,” *Hethitica* 8 (1987), pp. 399-400; *Id.*, *Geschichte und Kultur der Urartäer* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1995), p. 26; cf. Petrosyan, *Indo-European*, p. 79.

since the beginning of the 20th century already.⁶⁷ To the identification of Argišti with Gk. *argestēs* (note that in Urartian cuneiform writing *s* was rendered as *š* and *e* and *i* are interchangeable) I suggested identifying the name of the Urartian Minua with Greek Minuas (Minyas). For the existence of a Balkanic ethnic element in Urartu, I referred to the works of the most respected linguist G. Jahukyan. Thus, this approach to interpreting Urartian names is hardly new in Urartology.

Inaccuracies in Orthography and Translation

Traditionally Armenian, Anatolian, and Caucasian cultures may have been regarded as somewhat “exotic” and hence a certain dilettantism regarding the specifics of orthography or precision in renderings from those languages may have been acceptable. Nevertheless, in our current globalized environment with higher expectations of scholarly standards and accuracy, such inattention to detail finds less excuse. This naturally applies *mutatis mutandis* to exactness in the reproducing data from other languages as well, and, in that context, I acknowledge the criticism of spelling mistakes in some of the French titles listed in bibliography of my book. Because of my bad eyes I confided the drawing up of the bibliography to a person with an inadequate knowledge of French. At the same time, some of my colleagues reveal similar errors in their works with regard to Armenian material.

Thus, a range of Armenian names are transliterated inaccurately in Sergent’s review: Mehr, instead of Mher, Movsikyan instead of Movsisyan, Erwaz, Erwand (inexplicably in reverse order) instead of Eruand and Eruaz. Moreover, Teššub is twice mentioned as “le dieu de l’orage urartéen.” While it is true that Urartian and Hurrian are related languages, they are certainly not identical. The Urartian form of this name is actually Teišeba (this is analogous to presenting the Italian name Giovanni as the French counterpart of the English John).

There are several similar errors in Colarusso’s article, too. He reads the Urartian theonym ‘Aruba(i)ni as /warvani/ and /arvanyi/. Actually, the sign *’a* in Urartian is read as *wa/va*, the same holds true for *ba*: thus the theonym can be read /warub/va(i)ni/. The Urartian toponym Argišthinili is incomprehensibly interpreted as “Argisht-nom. pl.” The name of the powerful land of Etiuni, which covered the central and Northern areas of the Armenian Highland, he presents as a “city name.” Also, there are many technical errors in the presentation of Armenian and non-Armenian names and terms (e.g. Gk Theseos instead of Theseus).

Likewise, a number of Anderson’s interpretations of the names occurring in “Sasna Crer” are also incorrect: e.g. Deghtsun Dzam ‘Goldyllocks,’ Janp’olad ‘Steel Monster’ (respectively, ‘Yellow Tress,’ ‘Steel-Body’). On

⁶⁷ Ferdinand F. C. Lehmann-Haupt, *Armenien einst und jetzt: Reisen und Forschungen*, (Berlin: B. Behr, 1931), pp. 902-903, with bibliography.

occasion, Anderson's transliterations conflate Western and Eastern Armenian phonetic values, e.g. Dzam (Western) along with Deghtsun and Baldasar (Eastern). Similarly, the name of the Urartian king Argišti appears as Arkistis, an inexact West Armenian rendering. More serious is his analysis of the name T'evat'oros as "Winged bull," an interpretation, which is also found in Russell's works.⁶⁸ In fact, T'evat'oros and T'oros are both Armenian variants of the Greek name Theodoros.⁶⁹ The former may be interpreted 'Winged T'oros' as a folk etymology, but never 'Winged bull' (there is no term *t'oros* 'bull' in Armenian). Anderson's most curious mistake, however, is to identify the Dev Hamdol with the angel of death Groł, presumably the result of mere confusion. Let me also clarify a further misunderstanding related to Russian. H. Orbeli did not edit I. Orbeli's Russian version of the epic, rather, both figures are the same person (the Armenian form of his name Hovsep' is transliterated in Russian as Iosif).

Conclusion

In concluding I should like to return to some of the points I made at the beginning regarding the unity of the scholarly project and the need to avoid narrow partisan perspectives to ensure the uniform application of the same high expectations of academic research and writing in our fields regardless of background and location. This process can be facilitated by increased dialogue and exchange, and, in this connection, I should like to direct readers' attention to the journal *Aramazd: Armenian Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, published in the major European languages, which was founded in 2006 by a group of enthusiasts including myself with the express aim of fostering contact between scholars in the Armenian Republic and outside. At the same time, I appreciate the opportunity to write for this journal and encourage my colleagues in Armenia to publish more frequently in periodicals such as this in order to advance our common pursuit of knowledge with integrity, responsibility, and mutual understanding.

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⁶⁸ For a discussion of a number of such questionable interpretations, see Armen Y. Petrosyan, "J. Raseli 'hayagitakan' hnarank'nerē" (J. Russell's 'Armenological' Fabrications), *Patma-banasirakan handes* (2000/3), pp. 241-257, and Id., *Indo-European*, pp. 95, n.341, 177, n.609.

⁶⁹ Hrachya Acharyan, *Hayoc' anjnanunneri baaran* (Dictionary of Armenian Personal Names), vol. II, (Erevan, 1944), pp. 297, 345; Manuk Abeghian and Karapet Melik'-Ohanjanyan, *Sasna Çrer*, vol. II.2 (Erevan: Petakan Hratarakch'ut'yun, 1951), p. 841.